

U.S. Application No.:
PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Attorney Docket: 3978.017

REMARKS

The claims have been amended in order to eliminate multiple dependent claims and claims improperly depending from multiple dependent claims, and to otherwise conform the claims to U.S. practice. Care has been taken to ensure that no new matter has been added.

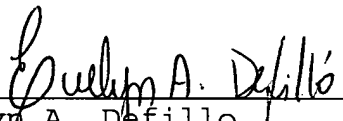
An abstract has been added to conform the application to U.S. requirements.

The specification has been amended to include the information regarding the PCT application.

Care has been taken to ensure that no new matter has been added to the Claims, Specification, or Abstract.

Favorable consideration and entry of the foregoing amendments prior to examination is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Registration No. 45,630

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Date: **January 10, 2005**

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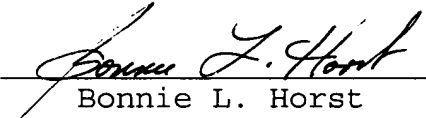
EXPRESS MAIL CERTIFICATE

"EXPRESS MAIL" MAILING LABEL NUMBER: **EV 550579630 US**

DATE OF DEPOSIT: **January 10, 2005**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Preliminary Amendment and a stamped receipt post card are being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. §1.10, with sufficient postage, on the date indicated and is addressed to: **ATTN: MAIL STOP PCT, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required at any time during the prosecution of this application without specific authorization, except for the issue fee, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 16-0877.



Bonnie L. Horst